ARNOLD DRAKE, CARMINE INFANTINO & NEAL ADAMS

MAY 1985
NO. 1

DEADMAN™

I... AM...

DEAD?

NO!

NO!

NO!

NO!

WHO IS THIS FANTASTIC FIGURE-- THIS EERIE EMANATION WHO STANDS SURVEYING **HIS OWN** BURIAL RITES? WHAT EVIL WAS IT THAT THRUST HIM PAST THE THRESHOLD OF DEATH? AND HOW CAN WE STILL SEE HIS GHASTLY GUISE? **NOW**--LEARN THE NERVE-SHATTERING SECRET BEHIND THE MOST ASTOUNDING CHARACTER IN THE HISTORY OF COMICS...

DEADMAN

I'M "BOSTON" BRAND-- OR I **WAS**, UNTIL ONE OF THESE PEOPLE--ONE PURE AND NOBLE SOUL--***KILLED ME!*** BUT ***RAMA KUSHNA*** HAS GIVEN ME THE POWER TO MOVE AMONG THE LIVING--UNTIL I FIND MY MURDERER! AND I ***WILL*** FIND HIM--IF IT TAKES UNTIL ***ETERNITY!***

SCRIPT BY ARNOLD DRAKE

"Who Has Been Lying in My Grave?"

ARNOLD DRAKE ..... SCRIPT
CARMINE INFANTINO ..... PENCILS
GEORGE ROUSSOS ..... INKS

"THE CIRCUS IS COMIN'!"

ONCE, THAT CRY THRILLED EVERY CITY, TOWN AND HAMLET THROUGH WHICH IT RANG! BUT NO MORE! MOVIES KILLED THE CIRCUS AND TV BURIED IT--NEARLY! ONLY TWO THINGS HAVE KEPT THE "BIG TOP" BARELY ALIVE--A SMALL BUT DEVOTED AUDIENCE OF SHRIEKING KIDS, AND MEN LIKE "BOSTON" BRAND! BUT WHAT DRIVES A MAN LIKE BRAND? OR WHAT DID DRIVE HIM, BEFORE A.30 CALIBER BULLET ENDED THE TRIP!

--LOOK, LORNA, THIS IS NO TIME TO TALK BUSINESS! I GO ON IN 15 MINUTES AND I'M STILL NOT MADE UP!

I'M SORRY, BOSTON--BUT THAT BANK NOTE COMES DUE TOMORROW AT NOON--AND I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO MEET IT! THE SHOW WILL GO UNDER!

DO NOT DISTURB

FORGET IT--I GOT YOU A POSTPONEMENT--60 DAYS!

OH, BOSTON--YOU'RE MARVELOUS! THE THINGS YOU'VE DONE FOR ME SINCE DAD DIED--

HOLD IT, MISS GOOSEBUMPS! I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING--FOR YOU! YOUR DAD LEFT ME 20 PER CENT OF THIS FLEA-BITTEN OUTFIT WHEN HE DIED!

THAT'S WHAT I'VE DONE IT FOR--ME! M-E!

YOU DON'T FOOL ME WITH THAT TOUGH-GUY ACT, BOSTON!

WHO SAID IT'S AN ACT?

I KNOW *RINGLING BROTHERS* OFFERED YOU FIVE TIMES WHAT YOU MAKE HERE--AND YOU TURNED THEM DOWN!

I DON'T LIKE THEIR FAT MAN--HE'S GOT DISGUSTING EATING HABITS!

WHY DO YOU KEEP TRYING TO KID EVERYBODY--AND YOURSELF--PRETENDING TO BE THE TOUGH GUY?!

PRETENDING?

LISTEN, SWEETHEART-- IT'S TIME YOU UNDERSTOOD--

--CIRCUS PEOPLE ARE LIKE CHILDREN--SICK, DANGEROUS CHILDREN! RUNNING IT IS LIKE CONDUCTING A KINDERGARTEN--WHERE EVERY KID'S GOT A MACHINE GUN IN HIS DESK!

DEADMAN

EUROPEAN TOUR

TRAPEZE ARTIST

SOLD OUT

STOP IT, BOSTON! I CAN'T STAND IT WHEN YOU TALK--AND LOOK--THAT WAY! THAT COSTUME AND MAKEUP--

GET USED TO IT! THIS IS ME--PROFESSIONAL EINK AND BRILLIANT TRAPEZE ARTIST--*DEADMAN!*

D

A TRAPEZE ACT HAS ONE MARVELOUS ATTRACTION--

DEAD MAN

DEADMAN

TEN MINUTES, MR. BOSTON!

DEADMAN

SOLD OUT

KNOCK KNOCK

--SHUT UP, TINY! AS I WAS SAYING, THE DUMB JOHNS PAY THEIR MONEY TO SEE ONE THING--

--I SAID *SHUT UP*, TINY!

BAM BAM!

--THEY'RE HERE TO SEE ME *DIE!*

BAWHMM

BAWHAMM

THEY'RE ALL HOPING THAT THE NIGHT THEY COME IS THE NIGHT IT'S GONNA HAPPEN--

TINY, YOU IDIOT-- CUT THAT OUT!

DON'T CALL ME NO NAMES, MR. BOSTON!

GOOD GRIEF! YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN! YOU TURNED ANOTHER DOOR INTO TOOTHPICKS, YOU MORON!

CRRRRACK!

I DON'T CARE IF OTHER PEOPLE CALL ME THEM NAMES--BUT NO! *YOU!*

CRRRAASH!

WHAT'S THE USE OF TALKING TO *YOU*--IT'S LIKE TRYING TO PLAY CHESS WITH A CHIMPAN-ZEE!

WHY DOES HE DO THAT, MISS LORNA?

SEE YOU AFTER THE SHOW!

HE'S NOT BAD LIKE THE OTHERS!

SO HOW COME HE MAKES FUN OF ME?

IT'S BECAUSE HE *LIKES* YOU! AND A MAN WHO'S IMITATING A ROCK CAN'T AFFORD TO LIKE ANY-BODY!

HUH?

TINY WORLD'S STRONGEST MAN

LIN! A WHALE of A WOMAN

MAJOR MITE

The MIGHTIEST MIDGET

VASHNU

WISE MAN of THE EAST

YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DO THIS, CONSTABLE!

I GOT ALL THE RIGHT I NEED--SECTION 113 OF THE PENAL CODE-- NO FORTUNE TELLERS ALLOWED! NOW GET GOIN', CONFUCIUS!

HOLD IT, LAWMAN!

VASHNU IS NO FORTUNE TELLER! HE'S A *CHARACTER ANALYST!*

IT'S THE SAME THING TO **ME**, HANDSOME!

NOT QUITE! IF I TOLD YOU THAT BOOKING HIM TONIGHT WOULD GET YOU CHARGED WITH *FALSE ARREST* TOMORROW-- THAT WOULD BE FORTUNE TELLING!

BUT IF I SAID THAT YOU ARE A STUPID EXCUSE FOR A COP--*THAT* WOULD BE CHARACTER ANALYSIS!

OKAY, WISE-GUY--JUST WATCH IT! I GOT MY EYE ON THIS WHOLE SHOW! YOU'LL BE SEEIN' ME AROUND!

ONE THOUSAND THANKS, SIR! YOU ARE VERY KIND, MR. BRAND! BUT THEN, YOU CAN AFFORD TO BE.

HUH?

AS I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE, *RAMA KUSHNA* WATCHES OVER YOUR FATE! I HAVE READ THIS IN YOUR EYES!

YEAH--WELL, SEE IF YOU CAN GET THAT SIX-ARMED DAME TO WATCH OVER THE BOX OFFICE! BUSINESS STINKS.

YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND-- RAMA KUSHNA IS THE FACE OF THE UNIVERSE!

IN A TINY APPLE IS ENOUGH ATOMIC POWER TO EXPLODE THE WORLD-- THAT IS RAMA KUSHNA!

A SINGLE RAIN-DROP MAY HOLD MORE MICROSCOPIC LIFE THAN THERE ARE PEOPLE ON EARTH, AND THAT--

--IS OUR OLD FRIEND RAMA, TOO! SO WHAT?

SO--YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN! RAMA KUSHNA HAS SOME SPECIAL GIFT WAITING FOR YOU ALONE! AND ONE DAY, WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT--IT SHALL BE YOURS!

SAVE THAT JAZZ FOR THE DUMB JOHNS OF THE COMMUNITY, VASHNU!

ALWAYS, HE SCOFFS! HE HAS NO GODS, NO FAITH, NO SHELTER! THAT MAKES HIM A FOOL!

NO, VASHNU-- THAT MAKES HIM THE LONELIEST MAN ALIVE!

HOLD IT, HELDRICH! HOLD IT ONE LOVIN' MINUTE!

:GULP!:

I TOLD YOU IF I CAUGHT YOU BOOZING AGAIN BEFORE YOU WALKED INTO THE *CAT CAGE*--I'D KNOCK YOU DOWN!

AROOOF!

SPLAATT!

I--I--I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, BRAND!

ALL YOU'LL GET IS YOUR FINAL PAY ENVELOPE--COLLECT IT TONIGHT AFTER THE SHOW!

AND DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU AROUND HERE AGAIN--*EVER!*

HEY, LEARY--YOU SHOULD BE OUT FRONT GIVING YOUR *SPIEL!* YOU'RE A BARKER, NOT A TICKET TAKER!

YEAH--UHH-I KNOW, BOSS! BUT GERTRUDE WAS SICK, SO I HAD TO SELL TICKETS FOR HER AGAIN!

HEY, CUT THAT OUT--GET OUT OF MY POCKET!

OKAY--BUT LEAVE SOME MONEY FOR US! I DIDN'T MIND WHEN YOU USED TO STEAL *HALF* THE TAKE--BUT NOW YOU'RE TAKING IT *ALL!*

YOU'RE A GOOD PITCHMAN AND A HANDY MAN TO HAVE AROUND, SO I EXPECT YOU TO STEAL A LITTLE! BUT DON'T BE GREEDY, "PARTNER!"

YOU GOT A BIG MOUTH--YOU KNOW THAT, BRAND? AND SOMEDAY SOMEBODY'S GONNA CLOSE IT FOR YOU--LIKE *FOREVER!*

CAR TONIGHT

LATER AS THE SHOW REACHES ITS THRILLING CLIMAX...

AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE MOST DEVILISHLY DANGEROUS AND DARING ACT IN THE HISTORY OF AERIAL ACROBATICS! THE MAN WHO NIGHTLY PITS HIS VERY LIFE AGAINST THE FATES--*DEADMAN!*

SCORNING ANY NET OR OTHER SAFETY DEVICES, *DEADMAN* WILL NOW SWING THROUGH FORTY FEET OF EMPTY, YAWNING SPACE--ALONE AND UNAIDED!

DON'T EVEN BLINK YOUR EYES, MY FRIENDS! WHO KNOWS, YOU MIGHT BE THE LUCKY ONES WHO FINALLY SEE ME MISS!

SLOWLY, THE GLEAMING CAPE FLOATS TO THE GROUND AND DEADMAN STEPS FORWARD TO BEGIN HIS AWESOME ACT! THE AUDIENCE WAITS BREATHLESSLY!

AND THEN...

CRRRACK!

WAS THAT A SHOT?

EEEEK! HE--HE'S FALLING!

TOBY, THE CLOWN, WAS THE NEAREST ONE TO THE BODY WHEN IT STRUCK...

SOMEBODY GET A COP!

I'M THE LAW! GET A *DOCTOR!*

FORGET THE DOCTOR, MR. LAW!... *HE'S HAD IT!*

OH, NO! :SOB!< IT CAN'T BE! :SOB!< HE'S NOT DEAD-- HE'S *NOT!* :SOB!<

EASY, MISS LORNA!

BUT WHY, TINY? :SOB!< WHY A WONDERFUL GUY LIKE HIM?

I DUNNO, MISS! NOBODY KNOWS, I GUESS.'

RAMA KUSHNA KNOWS! AND PERHAPS *THIS* IS THE BEGINNING OF THAT SPECIAL FATE WHICH HAS LONG AWAITED *BOSTON BRAND!*

A CIRCUS BURIAL IS NEVER SOLEMN! THEY ALL LIVE TOO CLOSE TO DEATH FOR THAT...

HE'S SURE GOT A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR IT.

LEAVE IT TO BOSTON! *HE* WOULDN'T LET IT RAIN FOR HIS *LAST SHOW!*

THE COPS'VE GOT A LEAD ON THE RIFLEMAN! WITNESSES SAY HE HAD A *STEEL CLAW* FOR A RIGHT HAND.

OH, WHY DON'T THEY STOP TALKING ABOUT IT!?

EASY, MISS LORNA!

I--I--I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU, BOSTON HONEY! ¡SOB!

NEITHER WILL I, YOU FINK! GOOD RIDDANCE!

YOU WERE KICKIN' ME OUT, EH, BRAND? WELL, *YOU'RE* GONE, AND I'M STILL WITH THE SHOW! HA-HA-HA!

LATER, WITH THE OTHERS GONE...

I COULDN'T SAY DIS IN FRONT OF *MISS LORNA*-- BUT I CAN *NOW!*

YOU WERE A *RAT,* MR. BOSTON! YOU LIVED LIKE ONE, --AND YOU DIED DA SAME!

IF YOU WASN'T NO RAT--YOUID NEVER HAVE LEFT HER LIKE DIS!

WHAT'S SHE GONNA DO NOW? WHO'S SHE GONNA TURN TO? AN'--AN'-- DAT GOES FOR ME, TOO! S-S-SO LONG, *RAT!*

BUT WHILE BIG TINY STANDS ALONE WITH HIS SORROW, LET US TURN BACK THE CLOCK TO THAT EARLIER TERRIBLE MOMENT...

=ARRGH!:= MY CHEST IS ON FIRE... I--I--I'VE BEEN SHOT!

HOLY COW! I'M NOT DEAD! I DON'T EVEN HURT! IT CAN'T BE! A GUY CAN'T FALL THAT FAR WITHOUT A SCRATCH!

FORGET THE DOCTOR! HE'S HAD IT!

ARE YOU KIDDIN', TOBY? DON'T PULL THAT CAPE OVER ME! QUIT JOKING! THE CROWD WON'T UNDERSTAND!

HEY, LORNA! CUT IT OUT! I'M *OKAY*, I TELL YOU! I'M *ALIVE*!

NO, YOU'RE NOT, MY SON! YOU DIED THREE MINUTES AGO!

WHO--WHO SAID THAT? THERE'S NOBODY HERE BUT *DORA*, THE BABY ELEPHANT!

I SAID-- YOU ARE *NOT* ALIVE, MY SON! YOU DIED THREE MINUTES AGO!

I--I--I'M LOSIN' MY MIND! THE--THE--THE ELEPHANT TALKED! IT MUST BE THE FALL--IT SHOOK MY BRAINS UP! I GOTTA GET SOME AIR!

AHHH! THAT RAIN FEELS GOOD! IT'S CLEARING MY HEAD!

HEY--THAT'S ONE OF PROFESSOR QUIGLEY'S TRAINED MICE! BETTER GET IT BEFORE IT ESCAPES!

M-M-MY HAND--IT WENT RIGHT *THROUGH* IT!

I TOLD YOU, MY SON--YOU ARE NOT ALIVE! THERE IS NO MORE SUBSTANCE TO YOUR BODY THAN THERE IS TO THE WEST WIND--OR THE APRIL MIST!

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?

LISTEN WELL--FOR I, RAMA KUSHNA, SPEAK BUT ONCE! BOSTON BRAND--YOU SHALL HAVE THE POWER TO WALK AMONG MEN UNTIL YOU HAVE FOUND THE ONE WHO KILLED YOU!

CRRRACK!

ARE YOU CRAZY? IF I CAN'T HOLD A MOUSE IN MY HAND--HOW CAN I GRAB A KILLER?

SPEAK TO ME! DON'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS--*HELP ME!*

I STILL DON'T GET IT! HOW DOES THIS RAMA KUSHNA EXPECT ME TO SQUARE THINGS WITH MY KILLER? AHHH, LOOK AT POOR TINY THERE! THE ONLY ONE WITHOUT BRAINS ENOUGH TO HATE ME!

I SURE WISH YOU COULD HEAR ME, TINY--THERE ARE A FEW THINGS I'D--

WHA--? WHEN I TOUCHED HIM--HE WENT STIFF, LIKE A STATUE! HIS--HIS EYES DON'T MOVE! HOLY COW--*RAMA KUSHNA* GAVE ME--*THE TOUCH OF DEATH!*

NO--HE'S ALIVE! BUT IT'S AS THOUGH HE WERE FROZEN!

AND-- AND I FEEL SOMETHING PULLING ME TOWARD HIM!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

I'M ENTERING HIS BODY! MERGING RIGHT INTO IT! I--I'M GONNA LIVE RIGHT INSIDE OF TINY!

Y-Y-YOW! I AM TINY! HE'S ALIVE--BUT HE'S NOT CONSCIOUS--SO I'VE BECOME HIS EYES, HIS EARS--HIS MIND! IS THIS THE GIFT OF RAMA KUSHNA-- TO LIVE AGAIN-- IN TINY'S BODY?

NO--RAMA KUSHNA TOLD ME WHAT THIS WAS ABOUT--I'M BEING GIVEN A CHANCE TO BRING MY OWN KILLER TO BOOK! THEN IT'S OVER FOR ME-- FOR GOOD! BUT WHAT A CHANCE!

HOW MANY GUYS GET A SHOT AT THE MAN WHO GUNNED 'EM DOWN?

ME--ONLY ME! I'M BACK FROM THE GRAVE--ON BORROWED TIME--BUT I'M GONNA LOVE EVERY SECOND OF THE HUNT!

BOSTON BRAN
1933—1967

HOLD IT, BUSTER! WHAT KIND OF DEAL IS THIS? HOW CAN I PASS FOR A LIVING MAN--WITH THIS GHOSTLY LIGHT AROUND ME?

'SCUSE ME, BUDDY!

CEMETERY

HUH? WHAD'YA--OH, UHHH, NO--I DON'T SMOKE!

OKAY! RELAX, SAM--YOU ACT LIKE YOU JUST SAW A GHOST!

HA-HA-HA-HA!

LISTEN TO THE KOOK--LAUGHING TO HIMSELF!

I'M NORMAL--100 PERCENT NORMAL, TO ANYBODY LOOKING AT ME! THAT'S PART OF THE GIFT, TOO!

NOW--LET'S GO PUT IT TO USE!

HELDRICH--**HE'S** A LIKELY CANDIDATE FOR THE JOB! I FIRED HIM AN HOUR BEFORE I WAS SHOT!

MIDWAY

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE STEEL HOOK? THEY ALL SAID THE RIFLEMAN HAD A STEEL--

WAIT! THERE'S HELDRICH--AND GET A LOAD OF WHO HE'S KEEPIN' COMPANY WITH!

K4

OKAY, HELDRICH-- HERE'S THE $50,000!

AND HERE'S YOUR POUND OF SNOW, RAMSEY!

SO THAT'S IT-- HELDRICH AND THE CONSTABLE! I'LL BET HE'S A PHONEY COP! GOTTA BLOW THIS THING WIDE OPEN!

KEE AHH

HOLD IT?! WHY STICK MY NOSE IN THIS? I'VE GOT JUST ONE JOB TO DO AND--

BRRRRIP!

AAAAH, SKIP IT! I KNOW I'M NOT GONNA LET THOSE TWO CREEPS DESTROY LORNA'S SHOW!

TINY! WHAT THE--?

I CAME FOR THE *DREAM DUST*, HELDRICH!

THE WHAT?

YOU KNOW-- *SNOW*-- POPPY JUICE-- OPIUM, BABY!

WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT--?

YOU DID--YOU SAID "SNOW"! AND WHAT **ELSE** SELLS FOR $50,000 A POUND?

WHY YOU DIRTY-- !HUNNN!

UPSY-DAISY, BABY! !OOOOF!

OH-OH! THERE GOES YOUR PARTNER OUT THE BACK DOOR!

COME BACK, CONSTABLE -- THIS GIG IS JUST WARMING UP!

AROOOF!

WHOOOSH!

OKAY, BULL-BOY! WE'RE CLOSIN' YOUR MOUTH THE HARD WAY!

CAN'T STOP HIM -- BUT WHAT DO I CARE--? YOU CAN'T KILL A DEAD MAN!

OH-OH! TINY--TINY COULD DIE! I'VE GOT TO SAVE--

BANG!

OWWFFF!

COME ON, ANIMAL TRAINER--WE'VE GOT TO DROP HIM INTO THE RIVER-- FAST!

YOU BET, FAST--THAT SHOT MUST HAVE WOKE UP THE WHOLE SHOW!

JUST GRAZED MY HEAD-- BUT ENOUGH IMPACT TO KNOCK ME OUT! NOW WHAT DO I DO?

HMMM! THE THING THAT WORKED ON TINY--MAYBE --

IT'S WORKING! I'M MERGING INTO THE COP'S BODY! I--I-- I CAN DO IT WITH ANYBODY'S BODY! HA-HA-HA!

HEY, HELDRICH-- PUT HIM DOWN FOR A MINUTE!

WHAT FOR?

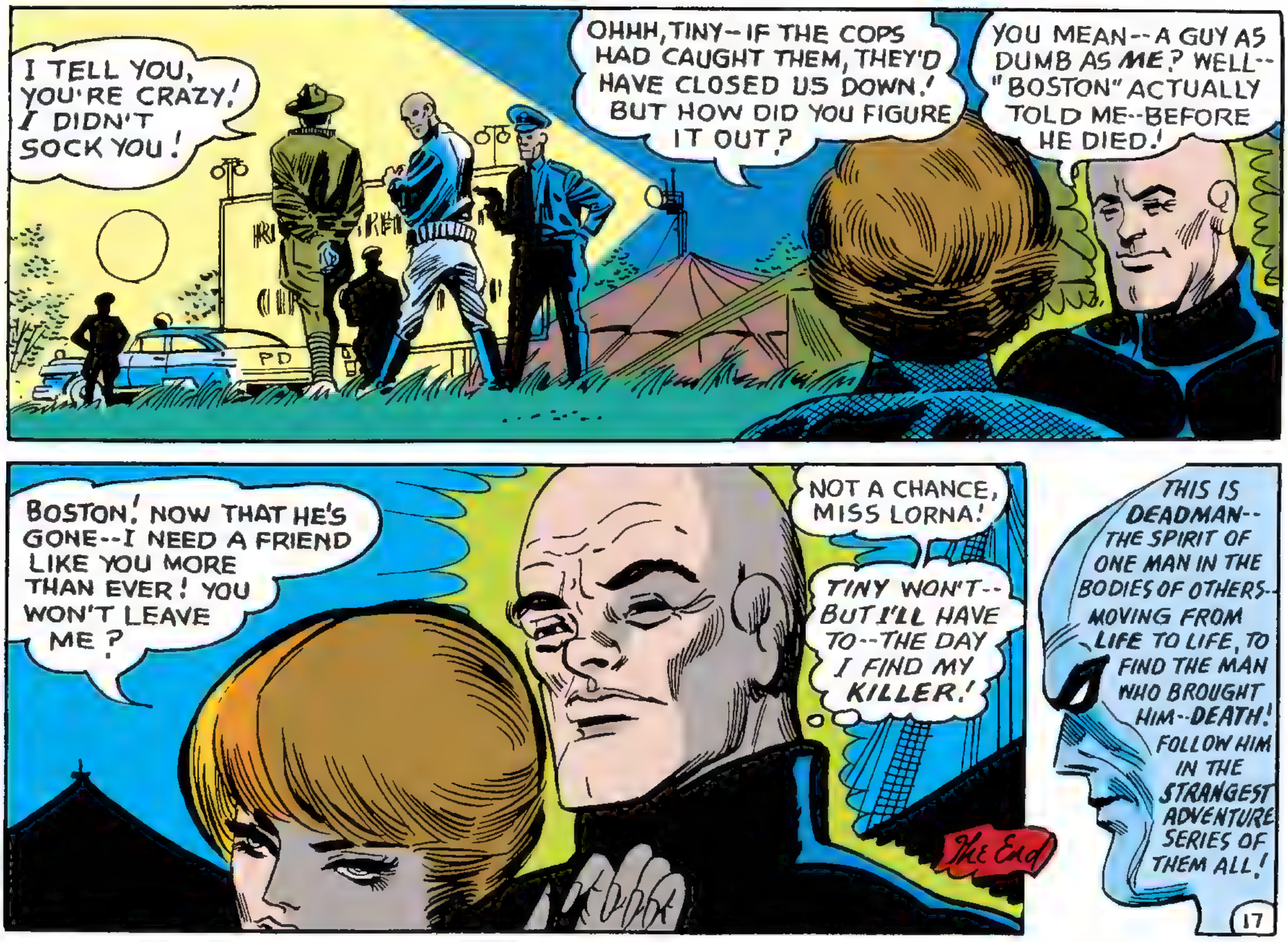
HERE'S WHAT FOR! UNNH!

OOWFF!

NOW TO GET BACK TO TINY'S BODY!

TINY! WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S GOING ON WITH HELD-RICH AND THE CON-STABLE?

DOPE SMUGGLING, MISS LORNA! HELDRICH WAS PICKING IT UP IN MEXICO WHERE THE SHOW SPENDS THE WINTER --AND THEN PEDDLING IT IN EVERY TOWN ON THE CIRCUIT!


I TELL YOU, YOU'RE CRAZY! I DIDN'T SOCK YOU!
OHHH, TINY--IF THE COPS HAD CAUGHT THEM, THEY'D HAVE CLOSED US DOWN! BUT HOW DID YOU FIGURE IT OUT?
YOU MEAN--A GUY AS DUMB AS ME? WELL-- "BOSTON" ACTUALLY TOLD ME--BEFORE HE DIED!
PD
BOSTON! NOW THAT HE'S GONE--I NEED A FRIEND LIKE YOU MORE THAN EVER! YOU WON'T LEAVE ME?
NOT A CHANCE, MISS LORNA!
TINY WON'T-- BUT I'LL HAVE TO--THE DAY I FIND MY KILLER!
THE END
THIS IS DEADMAN-- THE SPIRIT OF ONE MAN IN THE BODIES OF OTHERS-- MOVING FROM LIFE TO LIFE, TO FIND THE MAN WHO BROUGHT HIM--DEATH! FOLLOW HIM IN THE STRANGEST ADVENTURE SERIES OF THEM ALL!
17

ARNOLD DRAKE
Co-Creator/writer

I asked ARNOLD DRAKE what inspired him to create DEADMAN and he said: "Deadlines!" Actually, he was only half joking because one Friday the late JACK MILLER called Drake into his office. Miller told Drake that the book he had just inherited, STRANGE ADVENTURES, was in trouble and he needed a continuing feature to bring in readers. And he needed it by Monday!

As most comic book historians know, STRANGE ADVENTURES was an anthology book, which meant it contained three or so unrelated short stories—each story beginning and ending in the same issue. The sales of an issue, therefore, rested on the whims of the "casual" reader. But the comic book industry was changing and if SA was to survive it had to find a hero strong enough to attract a regular following. The character also was supposed to capture the flavor of the book. With those simple givens to ponder, Drake went home to work and rework several ideas.

The period was the late sixties, which was noted for a dynamic rise in interest in the occult and especially Eastern Mysticism. During the fifties the attitude of the people had been: "Aw, c'mon! You know there ain't no such thing as ghosts." But the coming of the Hippies brought about a rejection of the pragmatic way of life and a return to what was natural. From nature it was only a small step to supernature, more commonly known as the supernatural. Most of the young people of that era were into Astrology ("Like man, what's your sign?") and the most popular singing group of the period, the Beatles, was deep into Eastern religious teachings. Such teachings included the transmigration of the soul, astral projection, and reincarnation.

Drake admits to being influenced by the state of mind of the sixties when he came up with Deadman. Deadman is granted the power to enter other men's bodies by Rama Kushna, an East Indian deity. Drake does not explain exactly why Boston Brand is singled out by Kushna to roam the Earth in search of his murderer, but we may assume that his act of kindness toward the Indian fortune-teller, Vashnu, may have endeared him toward Kushna.

Drake pointed out that the theme of the spirit of a dead person taking over a living body with the aid of an Indian mystic has been used recently in the movie *All of Me* and was also the theme of the well-known thriller *Audrey Rose*. Although in the East this concept is an old one, here in the West it is fairly new and exciting and we probably will be seeing it used more often.

Come Monday Drake brought in the finished script to Jack Miller. Miller liked it immediately but was unsure that the Comic Book Code would approve the title of "Deadman." Drake, contended it was worth fighting for, assuring Miller that the Code would not give them any trouble. At the time, Carmine Infantino was working in the same office and said to Miller: "He's (Drake) right! Fight for that title!" Miller relented and the title remained as dubbed by Drake.

When Infantino showed Drake the splash page of the first story, Drake was delighted. Infantino had truly caught the spirit of the character, but Drake did ask for one change: "Boston Brand is supposed to be an ex-fighter. Bust his nose!"

—Nicola Cuti

DEADMAN

YOU ARE DEAD NOW, "BOSTON" BRAND. YOUR STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL IS ENDED! PEACE IS YOURS AT LAST!

THEN EVEN IN THE COLD HOUSE OF DEATH, YOU ARE STILL A BOILING CALDRON! WHY? WHAT CRUEL FUEL DRIVES YOUR WEIGHTLESS, FORMLESS BEING?

BUT ARE YOU NOT BEYOND THE PETTY MOTIVATIONS OF THE LIVING?

I CAN NEVER REST!

TO AVENGE MY OWN MURDER!

AN EYE for an EYE!

CARMINE INFANTINO ——— PLOT
JACK MILLER ——— SCRIPT
NEAL ADAMS ——— PENCILS
GEORGE ROUSSOS ——— INKS

TO SAVE A STRUGGLING FLEA-BAG OF A CIRCUS, "BOSTON" BRAND, ACROBAT SUPREME, DARED DEATH NIGHTLY-- PLUS TWO MATINEES A WEEK! STRANGELY, WHEN DEATH FINALLY SENT FOR HIM, THE COURIER WORE A STEEL CLAW-- AND A RIFLE!

ARRRRGH--

CRRRACK

"BOSTON" ALWAYS SAID THAT THE PEOPLE CAME TO SEE HIM DIE! BUT THEY DIDN'T ACT THAT WAY WHEN IT REALLY HAPPENED!

IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE FALL WAS ENOUGH TO KILL HIM-- WITHOUT THE ADDED WEIGHT OF THAT .30 CALIBER BULLET!

THERE'S NOTHIN' FOR IT! HE'S DEAD! START THE BAND UP! MAKE THE CROWD THINK IT'S ALL IN THE ACT!

TINY! TINY! IT CAN'T BE! SOB! BOSTON CAN'T BE DEAD! GASP! HE'S BEEN MY SHELTER-- MY STRENGTH-- SINCE DAD DIED! HE'S ALL I HAD! SOB!

EASY, MISS LORNA-- DON'T FALL! I--I--I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL! HE WAS TOUGH AN' STUBBORN AN' ALMOST COLD-- BUT HE WAS ALL WE BOTH HAD!

IT IS TRULY STRANGE! RAMA KUSHNA, SPIRIT OF THE UNIVERSE, GAVE ME A SIGN THAT BOSTON BRAND WOULD LIVE TO KNOW SOME SPECIAL POWER! COULD THIS MEAN A POWER-- AFTER DEATH?

BUT WAS HE REALLY DEAD? THEN WHO WAS IT WHO CRIED OUT--

--I'M ALIVE, LORNA, CAN'T YOU HEAR ME? I MADE IT, SOMEHOW-- THE BULLET, THE FALL, EVERYTHING! IT'S A MIRACLE BUT-- I'M ALIVE!

WHY THE TEARS? I'M **OKAY**, BABY! SEE? FEEL MY HAND!

HOLY COW! HER TEAR--IT FELL RIGHT **THROUGH** MY HAND!

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? IF I'M DEAD, WHY DO I SEE AND HEAR THEM ALL? IF I'M ALIVE, WHY DON'T **THEY** SEE **ME**? TELL ME! GIVE ME SOME ANSWER!

KIAK KRAKAKLE

THEN THE MIGHTY TREE BEGAN TO RIPPLE, LIKE THE RAIN THAT FELL UPON IT, AND THE RIPPLES SEEMED TO FORM--

YES, **BOSTON BRAND**, YOU ARE TRULY DEAD! BUT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN A SPECIAL POWER--

--POWER? **WHAT** SPECIAL POWER?

TO RETURN AND DESTROY YOUR MURDERER!

TO DESTR--**BUT HOW**? IF I CAN'T HOLD A SINGLE TEAR IN MY HAND, HOW CAN I KILL A --

-- WAIT! DON'T GO! DON'T LEAVE ME!

THE FUNERAL WAS BRIEF, AND NOT TOO CROWDED..

YOU'RE A LOUSY FINK, MR. **BOSTON**! YOU KNEW HOW MUCH MISS LORNA AND ME NEEDED YOU--WHY'D YOU DIE? **WHY**?

LOVABLE, DUMB "TINY"--IT FIGURES THAT HE'D BE MY ONLY MOURNER! HE WAS TOO STUPID TO HATE ME!

YOU POOR DOPE, FORGET ABOUT ME! I'M DEAD! AND NOTHING--

HEY! WHEN I TOUCHED HIM, HE WENT STIFF! HIS-- HIS EYES DON'T MOVE! IS THIS MY SPECIAL POWER-- *THE TOUCH OF DEATH!*

WHA-A-A-T! IT'S LIKE I'M-- I'M BEING PULLED TOWARD HIM! I'M ENTERING HIS BODY! *THIS* IS THE POWER-- TO LIVE *WITHIN* THE BODIES OF OTHERS!

BUT THERE SEEMED ONE HAZARD-- A STRANGE LIGHT THAT SURROUNDED THE BODY *DEADMAN* INHABITED! COULD LIVING MEN SEE IT?

GOT A MATCH, BUDDY?

SORRY, CHIEF, I DON'T SMOKE!

HE CAN'T TELL! *I'M* THE ONLY ONE WHO SEES THAT "HALO"! NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW THAT *BOSTON BRAND* IS "BACK!"

IN THAT NEW FORM, *DEADMAN* STUMBLED ONTO A NASTY PLOT...

I GET IT, *HELDRICH*.. YOU WERE USIN' YOUR JOB AS ANIMAL TRAINER IN THE SHOW TO PUSH NARCOTICS ALL ALONG THE ROAD!

BRRRRR'IP

TINY! LET'S GET HIM, *RAMSEY!*

THEN *DEADMAN* LEARNED THAT HE COULD ASSUME THEIR BODIES...

RAMSEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU'RE MY PARTNER!

I JUST DISSOLVED THE PARTNERSHIP!

WHAM

LATER...

BUT HOW, *MISS LORNA?* HOW COULD I CAPTURE THESE CROOKS AND NEVER REMEMBER IT?

YOUR HEAD WAS GRAZED BY A BULLET, *TINY*--THAT'S HOW! I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE ALIVE! I COULDN'T STAND TO LOSE YOU-- *TOO!*

News
DOPE RING SMASHED!

TINY REMEMBERS NOTHING BECAUSE IT DIDN'T HAPPEN TO HIM! IT HAPPENED TO A *DEADMAN!*

IT'S BEEN CHARMIN' TALKING TO YOU, *RAMA-BUDDY!* BUT I GOT TO BE MOVING AGAIN--LOOKING FOR A NEW BODY TO OCCUPY--AND A NEW CLUE TO MY KILLER!

AND UP THE ROAD, OTHER MEN ARE ON THE MOVE, TOO! A STRANGE NEW BREED OF MEN, WITH WHEELS FOR FEET AND *10 HP* ENGINES FOR HEARTS!

VROOOOM

VROOOOM

IUS

OKAY, WE'RE HERE! NOW GET THE DOUGH FROM HERE AND MAKE IT SNAPPY!

SHE'S NOT GONNA HAVE ANYTHING NEAR THAT KIND OF CASH, *MORTY!*

WE DON'T NEED IT ALL! TEN G'S IS ENOUGH--TO START! OTHERWISE THE *FUZZ* IS GONNA FIND OUT ABOUT WHAT YOU DID IN DAYTON--*BABY BROTHER JEFF!*

JEFF! SWEETIE! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S SUCH A MARVELOUS SURPRISE! YOU DIDN'T EVEN TELEPHONE!

NOPE! DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO RUN OFF BEFORE I GOT HERE!

OH, YOU CRAZY DOPE! WELL, HOW'S MY ONLY AND FAVORITE BROTHER?

JEFF--YOU'RE NOT IN ANY TROUBLE, ***ARE YOU?***

STILL THINK OF ME AS LITTLE-JEFF-THE-NAUGHTY-SCHOOL BOY, EH, SIS? FORGET IT--I'M IN A-1 SHAPE!

KULUNK

"MISS MONEYBAGS!" DAD'S OLD SAFE! REMEMBER HOW WE LEARNED THE COMBINATION AND USED TO HOOK NICKELS AND DIMES FROM IT WHEN WE WERE KIDS?

AND ***I'D*** ALWAYS SAY, "I'M JUST BORROWING IT!"

AND ***I'D*** ALWAYS SAY, "DON'T KID YOUR KID BROTHER, SIS!"

WELL, THIS TIME ***I'VE*** BEEN KIDDIN' ***YOU!*** YOU SEE, I ***AM*** IN A LITTLE TROUBLE--MONEY TROUBLE!

ONE LUMP OF SUGAR OR TWO?

ABOUT 10,000 IS WHAT I NEED--***DOLLARS,*** THAT IS!

TEN THOU--?! JEFF, I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE ***NEAR*** THAT MUCH!

SURE YOU DO--OR YOU ***WILL!*** YOU'RE GONNA HAVE $250,000 IN A FEW WEEKS--AND SO WILL ***I!***

WHATTTT!?

AT THAT MOMENT, THE *UNSEEN* ENTERS...

JUST WANTED TO SEE LORNA AGAIN--FOR A SECOND! THE POOR KID'S GOT EVERY-THING ON HER HANDS NOW--ALONE!

SURE--SHE'S GOTTA FLY SOLO BEFORE SHE EVEN KNOWS WHAT A "PLANE" LOOKS LIKE!

I KID YOU NOT, LORNA! AS HALF OWNER OF THIS CIRCUS, I DECIDED TO INSURE OUR STAR ACT FOR $250,000!

AND NOW OUR STAR IS DEAD!

LOOK WHO'S HERE--THE *BAD PENNY* HIMSELF! AND IT SOUNDS LIKE HE HAD A QUARTER OF A MILLION REASONS FOR KILLING ME!

'AT 'ABOY, JUNIOR! YOU WERE ALWAYS THE *LOWEST*--BUT NOW YOU *TOPPED* YOURSELF!

I GOT IT! I SLIPPED IT IN WITH A BATCH OF ROUTINE PAPERS I MAILED YOU--AND YOU SIGNED THEM ALL!

BUT YOU COULDN'T HAVE! YOU'D HAVE NEEDED *MY* SIGNATURE, TOO!

SO GIVE ME THE TEN G'S AND TAKE IT OUT OF THE INSURANCE MONEY WHEN WE GET IT!

NO! THERE'S JUST ENOUGH MONEY IN THE SAFE TO COVER THIS WEEK'S PAY-ROLL! YOU CAN'T TOUCH THAT!

YOU TELL 'IM, BABY!

I'M NOT GONNA ARGUE! NUTS TO YOUR CIRCUS! IT'S MY NECK I'M FIGHTIN' FOR! *UGGGH!*

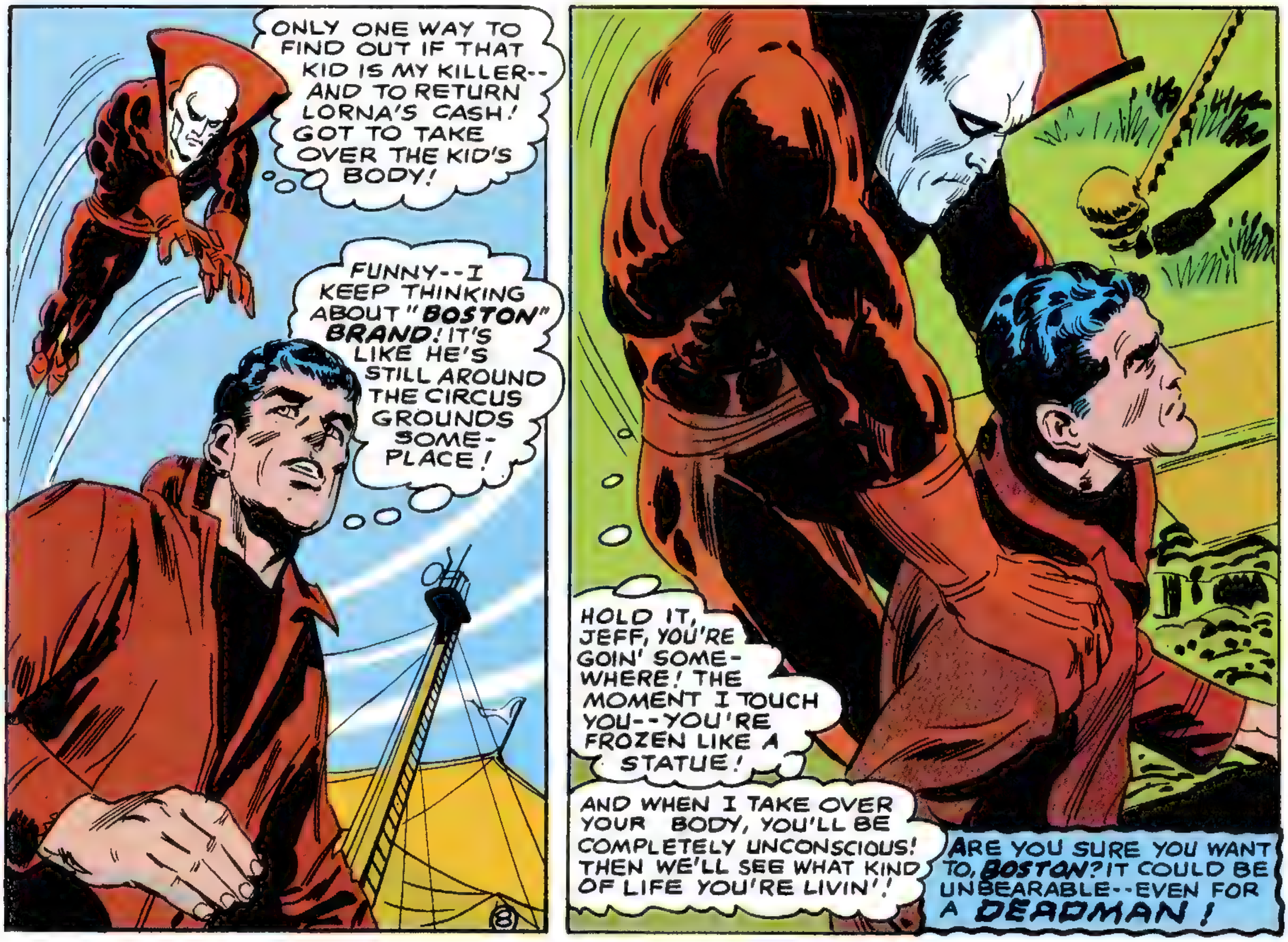
WHY YOU LITTLE CREEP--AHHHH! FORGET IT, *BOSTON*! IN YOUR PRESENT FORM, YOU COULDN'T PUNCH A HOLE IN A KLEENEX!

OHHHH!

DON'T DO IT, JEFF! PLEASE DON'T!

SKIP IT, SWEET-HEART! YOU'LL MAKE OUT! SEE YOU SOON!

SOONER THAN YOU THINK, BUSTER!


ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT IF THAT KID IS MY KILLER-- AND TO RETURN LORNA'S CASH! GOT TO TAKE OVER THE KID'S BODY!
FUNNY--I KEEP THINKING ABOUT "BOSTON" BRAND! IT'S LIKE HE'S STILL AROUND THE CIRCUS GROUNDS SOME-PLACE!
HOLD IT, JEFF, YOU'RE GOIN' SOME-WHERE! THE MOMENT I TOUCH YOU--YOU'RE FROZEN LIKE A STATUE!
AND WHEN I TAKE OVER YOUR BODY, YOU'LL BE COMPLETELY UNCONSCIOUS! THEN WE'LL SEE WHAT KIND OF LIFE YOU'RE LIVIN'!
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO, BOSTON? IT COULD BE UNBEARABLE--EVEN FOR A DEADMAN!

CARMINE INFANTINO
Co-Creator/Artist

When I called Carmine Infantino to find out his views on his part in the creation of DEADMAN, he apologized and told me that it was a long-standing policy of his not to give interviews. He did say: "Nickie, you know me pretty well (we shared an office when we both worked for Warren Publications and became friendly) and you know my work. Why don't you give your views on the subject?" So, here goes.

Carmine is going to read this before it goes to press and I hope he doesn't cut out this paragraph , because he did ask me not to make my comments too flowery. But I must mention that Carmine was one of the artists who had a strong influence on my career. One of the first pictures I copied, when I was a lad, was a spaceman drawn by Carmine. He was, and still is, one of the finest designers in comics and when I am stuck for an idea on how to lay out an illustration for one of the science fiction or mystery pulps I work for, I pull out an Infantino comic. I leaf through it until I find exactly the setup I need, and believe me, there's always one there I can use, and apply it as the springboard for my illustration.

Carmine designed every panel of DEADMAN for maximum dramatic impact—the close-ups, the far-away shots, the strong lighting, the silhouettes. One only needs to examine the chilling death scene and aftermath to understand exactly what I mean. Let's take it panel by panel.

We begin with the last panel on page 7. Deadman is climbing the ladder to his platform but he is not in the foreground. The ringmaster is there announcing the drama. All eyes are on the ringmaster because he is the one speaking. In spite of the spotlight, Deadman is no more than an ant crawling in the background. Why? because his moment hasn't come yet.

In the next panel on page 8, Deadman has arrived at the top of the platform and releases his cape. A close-up of him now? No! He feels tiny, alone. He knows that the audience secretly wants him to fall. Notice how both this panel and the previous panel are angled to keep the reader off-balance ... dizzy. The reader feels a touch of vertigo—perhaps the same disorientation Deadman is feeling

"CRRRACK!" The sudden close-up! Deadman is suspended in midair for a moment as the death bullet crashes into him. The people are the ants now. Small. Insignificant. This is his moment. His LAST moment of life.

Friends. Sorrow. Vashnu's fated words. Then on the next page—the funeral scene. This scene is one of my favorites. How I love the way Carmine handles groups of tiny figures. The mood is obvious but still compelling.

I couldn't close without a comment on the design of Deadman himself. Carmine sketched him during the late sixties when most of the best designs for super-hero costumes had been taken and what was left were the silly or nonsignificant outfits. Deadman, as Carmine designed him, stands out as unique. His costume is simplicity itself yet easily conveys the flamboyance of a circus daredevil. And the mask is the frightening deathmask of a bloodless corpse. No wonder Deadman's costume has undergone almost no changes since Carmine's first drawing. I also want to reveal that not only was Carmine Deadman's first artist, but he also plotted five of the early issues. Carmine Infantino—a man of many talents.

—Nicola Cuti

AND HERE I AM--*JEFF CARLING*, THE BROWN LEATHER KID!

HERE'S SOME INFO ABOUT HIM--ADDRESS BOOK, MOTORCYCLE LICENSE! I'LL FIGURE IT ALL OUT AS I GO!

THERE'S THE "BIKE"--SAME LICENSE NUMBER! NOW I'M ALL SET--UNTIL I RUN INTO SOMEONE WHO KNOWS JEFF!

HOLD IT, JEFF! DID YOU FORGET ABOUT *ME*, RICH BUDDY?

VROOOOM

YOU! HOW COULD I FORGET ABOUT *YOU*?

I DON'T EVEN *KNOW* YOU, UGLY *BUDDY*!

LET'S HAVE IT!

LET'S HAVE WHAT?

THE LOOT--THE BREAD--THE CASHOLA!

I DON'T HAVE ANY DOUGH! ABOUT EIGHT BUCKS IN ALL!

WHA' DYA CALL *THIS*, CHOPPED LIVER?

UHHH!

LISTEN, PRETTY FACE, DON'T GET CUTE WITH MORTY! 'CAUSE ALL I GOTTA DO IS WHISPER TWO SYLLABLES IN SOME COP'S EAR, *DAY-TON!* GET IT?

GOT IT!

I DON'T GET IT YET--BUT I *WILL*! AND THEN--*POW-GOES-MORTY!*

CRUMP!

OKAY, LET'S GO MEET THE REST OF THE GANG! THEY'RE WAITIN' FOR US DOWN AT *JACK'S SHACK!*

RIGHT! LEAD THE WAY, GREAT LEADER!

'CAUSE I'D *NEVER* FIND IT *MYSELF*, BUB!

IT'S ALL HAPPENING TOO FAST! TOO MANY NEW FACES COMING AT ME IN A LUMP! I'M BOUND TO MAKE ONE GOOF-- AND THEN IT'S *CURTAINS* FOR ME -- I MEAN, FOR LORNA'S BROTHER, JEFF!

JACK'S SHACK

JEFF-SWEETIE! I MISSED YOU! YOU WERE GONE TOO LONG--12 MINUTES, AT LEAST! I CAN'T STAND *LONG SEPARATIONS!*

THAT'S NICE!

HAW! THAT'S *NICE*, HE SAYS! A CHICK LIKE *MAGDA* HE CALLS "NICE"! JEFF-- YOU KILL ME! *HAW!*

MAYBE *THAT* CAN BE ARRANGED, TOO!

LAY SOME LIP ON ME, LOVER! *MMMMM!*

JEFF-BABY, YOU MAY BE THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF THE ORGANIZATION, BUT YOU SURE ARE A SEASONED HAND WITH THE CHICKS!

AND THOSE OTHER CATS DON'T DIG IT ONE BIT! "JEFF-BABY," HOW'D YOU EVER MANAGE TO STAY ALIVE SO LONG?

OKAY, GANG-- LET'S *RIDE!*

AHH-HAAAAA!

RIDE 'EM, CYCLE-HOUNDS!

RIDE WHERE? INTO WHAT KIND OF TROUBLE?

AND WHAT'S THAT ABOUT ***DAYTON***? WHAT'D JEFF DO ***THERE?*** AND HOW LONG BEFORE THE COPS PICK ***ME*** UP FOR IT?

BUT MOST OF ALL-- HOW DO I FIND OUT IF IT WAS ***JEFF-BABY*** WHO PULLED THE TRIGGER ON ME? ***HOW?!!!***

VAROOOM

THEN, AS THEY REACH THE NEAREST CITY...

OKAY, HERE'S WHERE WE SPLIT! MEET YOU AT YOUR PLACE TONIGHT, JEFF!

HOW ABOUT I COME ALONG WITH YOU RIGHT NOW, SWEETIE!

OKAY--HERE'S SOMETHING TO KEEP YOU WARM ALL THE WAY HOME! MMM!

NO CAN DO, HEART-OF-MY-HEART! GOT SOME WORK TO FINISH!

WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THESE DISGUSTING MOTORCYCLE GANGS?

SONS OF SATAN

LATER, AS DEADMAN SEEKS OUT THE ADDRESS IN JEFF'S WALLET...

HEY! I FOUND THE RIGHT KEY THE FIRST SHOT! I'M GETTIN' TO BE A REAL ACE AT LIVING OTHER GUYS' LIVES!

JEFF! I CALLED YOU ALL NIGHT! WHEN YOU DIDN'T ANSWER, I CAME OVER TO WAIT!

UHHH, HI, SWEETIE! I WAS VISITING WITH A SICK FRIEND!

YOWWEEEE! THIS JEFF'S GOT MORE CHICKS THAN THE YWCA!

JEFF, YOU'VE GOT TO STAY AWAY FROM THAT MORTY! HE'S POISON!

WHERE? IN THE KITCHEN?

RIGHT! ONLY I'M TOO BUSY TO TALK NOW, HONEY! GOTTA CHANGE MY CLOTHES!

OOOPS!

JEFF--WHEN WILL YOU STOP THIS RUNNING! WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

THE GUN THAT KILLED ME--AND I JUST STRUCK OIL!

HOLD IT! THIS IS A .22 CALIBER! THE RIFLE THAT KILLED ME WAS A .30! BESIDES, THIS GUN SIGHT IS WAY OUT OF LINE! IT WOULDN'T BE ACCURATE BEYOND MAYBE TEN FEET!

JEFF! THAT GUN! I KNEW HANGING OUT WITH MORTY WOULD LEAD YOU TO THIS! I'M LEAVING-- I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

HOLD IT, HONEY! IT'S ALL A MISTAKE! WAIT!

SORRY, JEFF-BABY! LOOKS LIKE I JUST COOLED YOUR LOVE LIFE! BUT I'VE GOT NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT *THAT*! I'VE GOT A PLAN FOR GETTING MORTY TO TELL ME ALL ABOUT *ME -- JEFF!*

SLAM

THAT NIGHT...

YOU HEARD ME, MORTY-- I'M NOT SPLITTIN' THAT *10 G'S* FROM MY SISTER! THAT *10 G'S* WAS THE LAST YOU'RE GETTING FROM ME!

WHAT?! ARE YOU KIDDIN'? YOU'RE BEGGIN' ME TO CALL THE *COPS!*

YEAH? AND TELL 'EM *WHAT?*

"YOU'RE TESTIN' ME, EH? OKAY-- I'LL TELL 'EM YOU SHOT A PUSHY GANG BOY NAMED LENNY DEANE IN DAYTON!"

FFF

BANG!

ARRRRGH!

AND THEN I'LL SHOW THEM THIS PHOTO -- WHICH I TOOK FROM A HIDDEN SPOT WHILE YOU WERE DOING THE JOB! OF COURSE, I *WON'T* TELL THEM *I* HIRED YOU TO SUB-CONTRACT THE KILLING!

SO THAT'S IT! SOME RIVAL MOB HIRED MORTY TO DO THE JOB-- AND HE HIRED JEFF IN TURN!

JUST WHEN WAS THAT PICTURE TAKEN?

YOU KNOW, BABY-- THE EXACT SECOND YOU SHOT DEANE-- 4:00 P.M. LAST SUNDAY!

WOW! I WAS SHOT ONLY MINUTES AFTER THAT-- A LONG WAY FROM DAYTON! WHAT AN IRONY-- JEFF ***COULDN'T*** HAVE KILLED ME, 'CAUSE HE WAS SHOOTING ***ANOTHER*** MAN AT THE TIME!

UHHH, LET ME THINK IT OVER, MORTY! I'LL CALL YOU BEFORE 10 IN THE MORNING!

ONE HOUR LATER, ON A PLANE TO DAYTON...

I KNOW JEFF DIDN'T KILL ME-- AND I'VE GOT A HUNCH HE DIDN'T SHOOT DEANE, EITHER! I'VE GOTTEN THIS FAR INTO HIS LIFE-- I MIGHT AS WELL TRY AND SAVE HIS NECK!

SHORTLY, AT THE DAYTON AIRPORT...

BANG!

BANG!

BANG!

LOADING

YOU THERE! JEFF CARLING! WE GOT A TIP YOU'D BE COMING IN ON THIS PLANE! ***STOP*** OR WE'LL FIRE!

GOOD OLD MORTY! HE SMELLED A RAT AND DOUBLE-CROSSED ME!

SORRY, BUDDY--I NEED THAT BAGGAGE CART MORE THAN YOU DO!

WHA--?

BANG!

TO TAXIS

YUIP!

BEEONG!

CAREFUL, BOYS--YOU'LL PUNCTURE THE BAGGAGE!

CRASH

T.O. TAXI CO.

THERE'S MY "GET-AWAY CAR"! *DEADMAN*--"WORLD'S GREATEST AERIAL ACROBAT"--COULD DO THIS JOB EASY! BUT CAN *JEFF*?

HE CAN!

THEY'RE RIGHT ON MY TAIL! ANOTHER MINUTE AND JEFF'LL BE AS DEAD AS *DEADMAN*! UNLESS--

ZING!

VIIP!

WHAMP

--UNLESS I CAN CHANGE HORSES IN MIDSTREAM! LIKE--

VIIP

VIIP

WHIP!

ZING!

--TH-I-I-I-S!

THIS LITTLE PEASHOOTER I FOUND HIDDEN UNDER JEFF'S SOCKS AND UNDERWEAR COMES IN HANDY!

BRANG-KEONG

CHAINS AND LOCKS FREE-- BRAKE RELEASED--HERE GOES--*SOMETHING*! *UGGGGH*!

SSCREEEEEECH

BAWOOOOM

THEY STEERED AWAY FROM IT, GOOD! BUT IT SLOWED THEM ENOUGH FOR ME TO GET TO THE SCENE OF THE MURDER AND PROVE JEFF DIDN'T KILL THAT HOOD!

SOON...

MY THEORY IS THAT THE BROKEN GUN SIGHT WOULD MAKE JEFF AIM MUCH TOO LOW AND MISS! SO THE BULLET MIGHT BE--

--HERE! I FOUND IT! AND BALLISTICS SHOULD PROVE IT WAS FIRED FROM JEFF'S RIFLE-- BUT DIDN'T KILL DEANE!

SO YOU FIGURED IT OUT, EH, JEFF? NEVER GUESSED YOU WERE BRIGHT ENOUGH! NOW YOU KNOW THAT YOU *DIDN'T* KILL DEANE-- **I** DID, AFTER YOU BOTCHED THE JOB!

THAT'S ONLY *ONE* OF THE *TWO* MISTAKES YOU MADE!

WHAT WAS THE OTHER?

THIS IS IT!

UH!

BEST WAY TO CLEAR THIS UP IS TO ENTER MORTY'S BODY AND "HELP" HIM TO CONFESS EVERYTHING TO THE COPS!

BUT GOT TO MAKE SURE THAT JEFF IS A *GOOD BOY* WHILE I'M GONE! A COUPLE OF SLEEPING PILLS SHOULD HOLD HIM!

LATER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

WANTED

OKAY, LOCK HIM UP! HE CLEARED JEFF CARLING! NEVER HEARD A MURDERER CONFESS THAT MUCH IN MY LIFE!

AND WAIT TILL MORTY WAKES UP IN HIS CELL AND HEARS ABOUT ALL THE NICE THINGS HE JUST SAID! HA-HA-HA!

THEY SAY I GOT MORTY TO TALK! BUT HONEST, MARTIA, I DON'T REMEMBER A THING!

I DON'T CARE-- AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER AGAIN!

AND I DON'T CARE--AS LONG AS YOU STAY OUT OF MY WAY, JEFF! BECAUSE SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW, I'M STILL GONNA FIND MY KILLER!

IT WAS A GOOD BIRTHDAY PARTY, IN SPITE OF THE **SILLY GIRLS**... AND **JAMIE** HAD WON THE DOOR PRIZE... **THE GAME!** THE FACT THAT HIS FATHER COULDN'T COME TO PICK HIM UP WASN'T ENOUGH TO DAMPEN HIS SPIRITS...

BE CAREFUL CROSSING THE VALLEY, **JAMIE!**

I WILL...THANKS, MRS. PRENTICE!

AND JAMIE MARKUS BEGAN HIS JOURNEY...

THE CLEAR AIR ADDED BUOYANCY TO JAMIE'S STEP...

OH-OH! I'D BETTER GET MOVIN'!

YES, JAMIE, YOU'D BETTER GET MOVING!

THE GAME

NEAL ADAMS

STORY and ART

RAIN'S COMING DOWN ... THE WIND'S TAKIN' MY BREATH AWAY!

IT'S SO DARK, I CAN HADLY SEE-- OUCH!

I'VE G-GOTTA FIND SOMEPLACE TO STOP! I'M ALL WET AND C-COLD!

IT'S THE OLD UNGER HOUSE... I'M NOT EVEN SUPPOSED TO GO NEAR THERE! B-BUT I'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF THIS RAIN... FOR A FEW MINUTES!

THE DOOR ECHOED OPEN AND JAMIE MARKUS STOOD NERVOUSLY... AFRAID... THE COLD DRIVING RAIN GAVE HIM THE COURAGE TO ENTER...

H-HELLO! ANYBODY HOME?

EMPTY! NO WALLS... NOTHING EXCEPT FOR...

...THAT!

WOWEE! IT'S... IT'S BEAUTIFUL, KINDA...

NO FURNITURE EXCEPT FOR THIS BED!...WILD, MAN!

WILD AND SOFT...

BOY...WHAT A BED...LIKE IT WAS MADE FOR A KING...OR A MOVIE STAR ...OR A... UH-OH!

SOMEBODY'S COMIN'... GOTTA HIDE!

THE DOOR OPENED SLOWLY... SLOWLY ENOUGH FOR JAMIE TO SCRAMBLE UNDER THE SOLITARY BED...

DARN! I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME IN HERE... DAD ALWAYS SAID NOT TO! I-I'M SCARED!

FOOTSTEPS SOUND LOUD... LIKE SOMEONE BIG...OR SOME-THING BIG!

IT'S COMIN' CLOSER... IT'S COMIN' RIGHT OVER TO THE BED... IT MUST KNOW I'M HIDIN' HERE!

AWW! I FEEL LIKE A JERK! IT'S PROBABLY A KIND LITTLE OLD MAN... NO ONE TO BE SCARED OF!

HE'S GETTIN' IN THE BED... I BETTER LET HIM KNOW I'M HERE ... BEFORE HE FALLS ASLEEP!

I'LL JUST SAY, "EXCUSE ME I'M JAMIE MARKUS..." AND... NO... NO...I'LL SAY, "EXCUSE ME, SIR..." GEE... SUPPOSE IT'S A LADY?

WELL, HERE GOES!

PARDON M--

WHO IS IT? WHO ARE YOU? HUH? HUH?

WAIT A MINUTE, I'LL TURN A LIGHT ON! JUST YOU WAIT A MINUTE!

H-HEY! YOU LOOK JUST LIKE ME! EXACTLY!

SO WHAT? YOU LOOK JUST LIKE ME, TOO... BUT THIS IS MY HOUSE NOT YOURS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU DON'T BELONG HERE!

I-- I JUST CAME IN OUT OF THE RAIN! IT'S AWFUL OUTSIDE, YOU OUGHTA KNOW THAT! IF I COULD STAY...

NO! YOU CAN'T STAY UNTIL THE RAIN STOPS! IT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION!... YOU MUST LEAVE NOW, JAMIE MARKUS!

HEY!... HOW COME YOU KNOW MY NAME?... AND... AND WHY CAN'T I STAY? IT'S A BIG HOUSE AND I WON'T STEAL ANYTHING...'CAUSE THERE'S NOTHIN TO STEAL!

NO! YOU CAN'T STAY... I CAN'T EXPLAIN! IT'S OUT OF MY HANDS!

ALL RIGHT, IT'S YOUR PROPERTY... I GUESS... IT WON'T MATTER IF I GET RAINED ON FOR AN HOUR OR SO...

HEY, LOOK, JAMIE... I'M SORRY, IT'S LIKE I SAID... IT'S OUT OF MY HANDS!

WAIT! WAIT A MINUTE ... WHAT'S THAT PACKAGE?

IT'S A GAME, A WORD GAME! YOU MAKE WORDS OUT OF SEVEN LETTERS... AWW, IT'S TOO COMPLICATED TO EXPLAIN!

WAIT! HOLD IT, IS IT HARD TO LEARN?

NAA... I COULD TEACH YOU IN FIVE MINUTES!

WOULD YOU TEACH ME?

SURE!

AND THEY PLAYED THE GAME... THEY MADE WORDS, AND POINTS ... AND THEY ARGUED AND AND INSISTED AND DENIED ... AND YELLED... FOR HOURS!

THAT'S SLANG!

IT IS NOT!

THAT'S NOT A WORD!

NO PERSONAL NAMES! IT SAYS SO IN THE RULE BOOK!

IT IS SO, DUMMY... EVERYBODY KNOWS WHAT AN "EON" IS!

HA HA! I WON!

FINALLY...

TWO OUT OF THREE GAMES!

YES, JAMIE WON, BUT DID HE?

C'MON... DON'T BE A SORE LOSER... LOOK, THREE OUT OF FIVE! LET'S PLAY!

NO!

I QUIT! YOU CHEAT!

DADDY...

JAMIE... JAMIE... SON!

HOW DID YOU GET HERE? WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU ALL NIGHT!

I'M ALL RIGHT, DAD! I JUST CAME IN HERE TO GET OUT OF THE RAIN!

RAIN?... JAMIE... THERE'S BEEN A **FLOOD!** EVERYTHING IN THE VALLEY HAS BEEN WIPED OUT... EVERY TREE, EVERY HOUSE...

EVERYTHING! EXCEPT THIS COCKEYED FOUR-POSTER BED...

AND YOU SAY YOU'VE BEEN IN IT **ALL NIGHT?**

S-SURE, BUT I DIDN'T NOTICE... ANY... FLOOD... OR... **THIS IS CRAZY!**

I WAS HERE ALL THE TIME PLAYIN' A **GAME** WITH MY FRIEND...

I SWEAR, DAD... HE WAS HERE A MINUTE AGO!

THE END

D